

---

A  
LETTER

To the Right Reverend the  
Lord Bishop of *Chichester*.

---

Francis Hare.

---



Lord Bishop of Chichester.

---

A  
LETTER

To the Right Reverend the  
Lord Bishop of *Chichester*.

Occasion'd by

His LORDSHIP'S  
SERMON

ON

*January 30. 1732.*

---

THE THIRD EDITION.

---

L O N D O N :

Printed for T. PAYNE, at the *Crown* in  
*Pater-Noster-Row*. MDCCLXXXII.

7

# LETTER

To the Right Reverend the

Lord Bishop of Chichester.

Occasion'd by

46

His Lordship's

SELECTION



JANUARY 30. 1732.

THE THIRD EDITION.

LONDON.

Printed for T. BAYNE, at the Green in  
St. Dunstons Church-yard.

---



---

A  
L E T T E R

To the Right Reverend the

Lord Bishop of *Chicester*:

*My* Lord,

**T**HOUGH the Discourses we are entertain'd with from the Pulpit on the Thirtieth of *January* have been, for the most part, of such a Nature, that they are one great Reason why many Honest Men have wish'd the Observation of that Day might be laid aside, yet I could not help raising my Expectations to something very dif-

different from what we have been us'd to, when I heard that this Subject was to be handled by one of your Lordship's great Abilities, and in whose Favour we were all so justly prejudic'd by a *famous Treatise* \* writ many Years ago, in a more free and generous Spirit than is common to the Productions of the Clergy. Your Lordship has indeed, out of an Excess of Modesty, (a Fault very excusable in a Divine,) chose to withdraw your self, as much as in you lay, from your just Praise and Reputation, by not setting your Name to *that Book*, and desiring not to be known for the Author of it;

\* Difficulties and Discouragements, &c. supposed to be written by Dr. Hare.

but

but the World has done you justice against your Will, and Those who had the Honour of Thinking in the same manner with your Lordship at that Time, are proud to see their Opinions supported by so considerable an Authority: But I am at a loss how to express what a Concern and Mortification it is to all such Admirers of your Lordship, that upon reading this last Discourse of yours, they find the *High-Church Spirit* so strong in it, and a compleat System of Slavery laid down, with only now and then a little Colouring, design'd rather to disguise than to correct it.

The first Position they are startled at, and which they find

find very often repeated, is, that it is a Breach of our Duty and Allegiance, to attempt or desire any Change either in the Church or State. Recollect your self a little, my Lord, and you will find that by the Constitution of our Government, there is a perpetual Power residing in it to make such Alterations in Both, as either an occasional Expediency, or Corruptions and Abuses crept into them, may render necessary. Without this, there would be no Business for a Parliament, but merely to give Money to the Crown, since every new Law made by it, is doubtless an Alteration, and such the Variation of human Things will continually require. If therefore your Doctrine be true, that all  
Attempts

Attempts to change any thing in the present Frame and Order of Church or State, are so many Acts of Disloyalty and Rebellion, what Reformation can possibly be carried on, what Redress is this Nation to expect from its Representatives in Parliament of any present or future Grievances?

\* In the Reign of King *Charles* the Second, when no Method of invading our Liberties was left untried, there was a Design of establishing this very Doctrine by an Oath to be taken by all Members of both Houses of Parliament, all Privy Counsellors and Justices of the

\* See an Account of this Affair in Mr. *Lock's* Remains.

Peace, and all Persons holding any beneficial Office, Ecclesiastical, Civil, or Military. The Bill which was to impose this Oath was styl'd, *An Act to prevent the Dangers which might arise from Persons disaffected to the Government*, and the Advocates for it, which were chiefly my Lords the Bishops, argued just in the same manner as your Lordship, that Men who should once begin to change would never know where to stop; that the Rebellion of Forty-one ought to be a Warning to us not to suffer that Spirit to get any ground; that all was perfect both in Church and State, and would ever continue to be so; and therefore they requir'd all Persons who could possibly

[ II ]

possibly have any thing to do with them, to swear that they would not at any time endeavour to make any Alteration in the Government of either. This Bill was debated in the House of Peers with great Opposition from all those who had any Regard for the Welfare of their Country, and after a long Struggle of sixteen or seventeen Days Duration, it was at last carried in the Committee by the Unanimity of the Bench of Bishops; but before it could pass into an Act, was providentially stopt by the Dispute of Priviledge breaking out between the two Houses; otherwise the whole Nation must have been reduc'd to the sad Necessity of being either perjur'd or enslav'd.

I think it probable that your Lordship had your Eye upon this remarkable Bill in the whole Tenour of your Argument, and that you had a Mind to try whether or no the present Age would swallow such Notions as easily as some of their Predecessors: But, my Lord, the Influence of the Church is not so strong upon us now as it was then; we are grown too wise to be preach'd out of our Liberties, and the Clergy will not be half so useful as they formerly were, to any Prince who shall have a mind to enslave us, if such a Design should ever be form'd again. I can't help taking notice of one Assertion that has dropp'd from you in arguing  
upon

upon this Matter; which is this, — *That wise and good Men will rather acquiesce under any Form of Government than attempt to change it, because of the Hazard that attends all Changes, and of the great Difficulty to determine which Form is really the best.*

My Lord, we are inclin'd to think our own, with all its Faults and Imperfections, is infinitely better than that of *France*; and should it ever be our Misfortune in future Times to have an arbitrary Form impos'd upon us, we should believe it worth our while to attempt to *change* it, let the *Hazard* be what it would. There is no Confusion, no Misery,

fery, no Bloodshed which such a Struggle might produce, but is preferable to an abject Acquiescence under Tyranny and Oppression. This, my Lord, has always been the Sentiment of the *wise* and *good Men* in this Country, though you, it seems, are of a different Opinion; and I perswade my self that we shall still preserve so much of the Spirit and Virtue of our Ancestors, as to disclaim all Notions of Obedience but what are consistent with our Liberty.

I hope your Lordship did not mean so ill as your Words import; but I am sure it is of Consequence to the Nation that all who read them should be  
 sensible

fenfible of the Mifchief there is in them. Slavery, fet forth in its proper Colours, will be odious and terrible to every Body; but thus foften'd, thus gilded over with artful Turns and Ornaments of Rhetorick, it may be too eafily receiv'd by unwary Minds, and many honeft Men may lofe that Horror of it which is our beft Guard and Security againft it.

My Lord, I have a great Reverence for your Order, and efpecially for thofe who are diftinguifh'd in it by fo high a Station; but really it is a *great Difficulty and Discouragement* to me, and all Friends of the Clergy, when we attempt to defend you againft your Enemies,

mies, that you so frequently engage on the Side of despotick Power, and do your utmost to perswade Mankind that it is indifferent to their real Good and Interest, whether they are free or not. What makes this the more unpardonable in your Lordship is, that you do it *unsought* for and *unthank'd*: For they whom we have at present the Happiness to be govern'd by, and whom I suppose you would be thought to make your Court to, have a hearty Detestation of such Principles, and are desirous that the People of *England* should know the Value of their Liberty, and preserve it in its full Extent.

I won't

I won't examine very strictly into your Panegyrick upon King *Charles* the First, though, in order to do him Honour, you are oblig'd to take some Points for granted which I am afraid are very doubtful; but I must blame you, for not distinguishing between those, who were concern'd in the Murder of that Prince and the utter Subversion of our Government, and those, who engag'd themselves at first in a Resistance necessary for its Preservation. The Cause and Spirit of these Men were widely different, and ought not to be confounded together; nor are the latter to be charged with the Calamities which unforeseen and fatal Accidents unhappily brought

C

upon

upon their Country. Those are justly accountable for the Miseries consequential to the Civil War, who involv'd the King in such Measures as lost him the Confidence of his People, and threw the Government out of its natural Situation into a State of Tumult and Disorder. When that is once done, no human Prudence can command the Event; but the best Men and the best Cause may suffer by falling into the Hands of Villains, who are wicked and fortunate enough to make an Advantage of the publick Confusion.

I must take the Liberty to observe to your Lordship, that

I believe no body but yourself has had the Courage in the present Age to insist upon the *good Character* of those Men by whose Advice the King attempted those illegal Acts, which were the great Causes of all the Mischiefs that ensued both to Prince and People. In good Policy you should have blacken'd their Reputations as much as possible, that the Weight of our Resentment, and that of Posterity, may fall entirely upon them, and that they alone might be branded with the Guilt and Infamy of those Proceedings. I won't press this any farther upon your Lordship, but must beg Leave to take notice of an Insinuation in Page the

Fourteenth, where you take occasion, from many of the Nobility having join'd with King *Charles* the First, to intimate to us that the *Body of the People* are not in any Country proper Judges whether they are oppress'd or not. This Doctrine can never be supported from rational Principles of Government, which must allow *them* the Right of judging for themselves in a Point that so much concerns them; and naturally they will judge better of it than those who may be influenc'd and corrupted by a Court. The Nobility and Bishops in *France*, who are Pensioners and Dependants on the Crown, are most of them well satisfied with the  
 present

present Government, and the Bull Unigenitus ; but the People in general complain bitterly, and with sufficient Reason ; nor can any Man say, that if they were able they wou'd not have a Right to contend for their Liberties and Consciences, though all the great Men and reverend Prelates were on the Prince's side. Your Lordship will, I dare say, be so candid as to acknowledge, upon a little Reflection, that your Argument here is fallacious.

I am now to consider the Conclusion of your extraordinary Discourse, which is more immediately directed to us, and which it seems we are principally to draw our Instruction from;

from; and it is Matter of great Astonishment to me to find in it this Assertion, *That the same Spirit which actuated those Wretches who cut off King Charles's Head is still alive, and even General among us; nay, that it is busily now at Work, and carrying on the same execrable Design against his present Majesty.* For God's sake, my Lord, what Proof have you, what Evidence of such a Fact as this? And if they be wanting, how dare you suppose a thing so highly injurious to the Nation! Have there been any publick Marks of Disaffection, any Treasonable or Rebelious Behaviour, upon which you have the Confidence to ground an Imputation of this kind? it  
would

wou'd be great Immorality to bring such a Charge against any *private Man*, without strong and convincing Testimony; but surely the Reputation of a *whole People* ought to be attack'd with much greater Caution, and the Guilt of tainting it unjustly is beyond comparifon more heinous. What an Odium do you hereby throw upon his Majesty's beneficent and gracious Government, of which the Love and Satisfaction of his People are the surest Proof! In what Manner does your Lordship think that all his Subjects will resent this Calumny, which treats them as guilty of the blackest and most unpardonable Ingratitude? if it be highly criminal to endeavour to estrange the Hearts *of the People*

*People from their Prince*, is it less so to try to alienate the Affections *of the Prince from his People*? Ought not their Confidence to be mutual? Does not the Happiness and Security of both depend upon it? We have reason to bless God that his Majesty has such a Trust in the experienc'd Loyalty and Dutifulness of his Subjects, that it is not in the power of artful Men to rob them of his Esteem and good Opinion, by misrepresenting them to him. He well knows that the Enemies of his Government are look'd upon by his People to be theirs, and that whatever Poison they may be suppos'd to breed in their own Bosoms, such is the good Temper of the Nation, that it will not be possible

fible for them to communicate  
 it, so as ever to make it Epi-  
 demical. And as for the Gentle-  
 men in the Administration, I be-  
 lieve, my Lord, they will disa-  
 vow this Character you have been  
 pleas'd to give the People of  
*England*, whose Honour they  
 are concern'd to Vindicate, and  
 whom I hope they will always  
 shield from Accusations brought  
 against them with so little Foun-  
 dation.

I perfectly agree with your Lordship in detesting the many Libellous Writings in which his Majesty's Measures have been exposed, and his Ministers defam'd, often without either Truth or Decency: But I am far from thinking they amount to any  
D thing

thing like the Spirit of Forty-one, which arose and spread itself from a Sense of real, not imaginary Grievances, and which the most skilful Libellers in the World cou'd never have carried to such a Height, had it not been founded upon, and supported by a long Experience of the ill Intentions and Insincerity of the Government. Nor can I come into that Remedy against this Evil, great as it is, which you seem to call for, I mean a Restraint upon the Liberty of the Press; because I am convinc'd that it is more prudent to suffer some temporary Inconveniences than to part with the most valuable Blessing a free People can enjoy: And this I am perswaded is the Opinion

pinion of those that are now in Power, as well as it is mine, who have themselves made use of it at proper Times very much to their own Honour, and their Country's Good. But I don't know how it happens that the Clergy, who your Lordship tells us *are the chief Support of the Crown*, are every now and then inciting it to Measures which wou'd greatly endanger its Security. I thank God we are still govern'd by Laymen, who I doubt not will be so wise as not to hearken to these mischievous Admonitions, tho' they have the Sanction of coming to them from the Pulpit, but pursue their own Principles of Policy, without consulting the Clergy in Affairs

D 2                      which

which don't belong to them. They are very useful to us as *Ministers of the Gospel*, and while they are content with that Character, deserve all Encouragement and Respect, but when ever they wou'd be *Ministers of State*, it is for the general Interest of Mankind that they should be vigorously opposed.

I beg your Lordship's Pardon for the Trouble I have given you on this Occasion, which I should not have done, but in hopes of drawing from you an Explanation of those Passages in your Sermon which give most Offence; and I am perswaded that you will agree with

with me in thinking something of that kind necessary, when you are well inform'd in what Sense it is understood by almost every Reader. I must conclude with complimenting your Lordship upon the Art your Discourse is written with, which plainly shews that no Part of it proceeds from Bigottry or Enthusiastick Zeal, but that it is the Result of cool Deliberation and sober Thought. As I have great Reason to believe you are *sincere* in what you say, and that you meant the Good of Mankind, agreeably to the Duty of your sacred Character, I *as sincerely* join in those *Thanks* to you which you have already

[ 30 ]

already receiv'd, and heartily  
wish that in all your future  
Writings you may deserve *the*  
*Thanks of the Nation.*

*I am,*

*My LORD,*

*With great Respect,*

P. C.



